

## **GLOBAL OCEAN FORUM NEWS - April, 2012**

### **Rio+20 Negotiations at a Difficult Point**

#### **Overview: Rio+20 Negotiations at a Difficult Point**

One year ago at the start of the Rio+20 discussions, there were very few references to oceans, coasts, and SIDS in the initial discussions. By November of last year, we were all very happy to see significant mobilization on the part of member states, NGOs, international organizations, and others. In the initial inputs to the Rio+20 zero draft, 67% of national submissions and 100% of political grouping submissions (e.g., G-77 and China, EU, CARICOM, Pacific SIDS) referred to oceans, coasts, and SIDS.

We were also very pleased to see strong paragraphs on oceans in the zero draft, which appeared in January, although we thought that they needed to be more specific and more actionable. In my view, the initial draft did not cover sufficiently very important topics, such as:

- integrated ocean governance
- climate and ocean issues
- capacity development
- need for enhanced financing, especially for coastal developing countries and SIDS.

Last week's "informal-informal" Rio+20 negotiations (held over the period March 19-27, 2012) were rather frustrating to watch, with country interventions going very much counter to each other.

I understand that this is the time in the negotiating process when things get very messy. But, at the same time this is worrisome, as in some cases, there appear to be intractable divisions among countries.

The Major Groups also worry that, in some cases, it looks like the principles and actions agreed to in Rio and Johannesburg are also being eroded. A large number of NGOs signed an open letter to the UN Secretary-General, entitled "Rights at Risk," which voiced strong concerns over the lack of text on human rights and equity issues, as well as on the exclusion of civil society from participating in the negotiating process.

The global community cannot allow this to happen. We can't let the Rio opportunity evaporate. We know that our planet and its people are in trouble, and that we need concerted and strategic action, accompanied by strategic financing, to pave the way forward.

In this issue of Global Ocean Forum News, we provide a recap of the negotiations and of the oceans side event held on March 26, 2012. We urge governments, international organizations, NGOs, and others to continue to push for a significant "ocean package" outcome at Rio+20, with concrete, actionable, and ambitious provisions on the major ocean, coastal, and SIDS issues.

We will report again from the next set of Rio+20 negotiations to be held during the period April 23 to May 4, 2012. For those attending, please mark your calendars for two Friends of the Oceans at Rio+20 events to be held on the evenings of April 24, 2012, and of May 1, 2012 (6:15 PM at the UNDP headquarters located across from the United Nations at 304 East 45th Street (10th Floor), New York, NY.

Dr. Biliانا Cicin-Sain, President, Global Ocean Forum

## **Recap of Negotiations on the Rio+20 Outcome, Including for Oceans, Coasts, and SIDS**

On March 19-23, 2012, the first round of ‘informal-informal’ negotiations on the zero draft of the outcome document of Rio+20 took place at the UN Headquarters in New York. Ambassador Sha Zukang, Secretary General of Rio+20, presented the new draft text, which contains all of the proposed amendments to the zero draft text from States. In his opening remarks, he noted the enormity of the task ahead, and reminded the participants that the General Assembly’s mandate is to come to agreement on a focused political document and that Rio+20 is intended to be a conference of implementation. The outcome must close some of the existing implementation gaps, address new and emerging challenges, and mobilize the political will to address them effectively. Though the document is being reviewed as separate chapters, he reminded the representatives that the outcome document is intended to be a coherent whole.

He proceeded to note points of convergence of ideas under the two themes of the conference: the green economy and the institutional framework for sustainable development. In the green economy, three points of convergence are emerging; it should be viewed as inclusive and equitable, it should respect country ownership and different levels of development priorities, and it should avoid protectionism and aid conditionalities. He noted that the task at hand is to address these risks associated with the green economy, while recognizing the inherent opportunities.

In the discussion on the institutional framework for sustainable development (IFSD), there is consensus on the fact that the IFSD should: integrate the three pillars of sustainable development, enhance review and reporting of implementation, and address new and emerging challenges, although there is no clear convergence on how the new framework will achieve these, apart from agreement on the need to strengthen UNEP. Another emerging idea is the possible development of aspirational goals and targets, covering a range of issues—food security, energy, water, land degradation, sustainable livelihoods, disaster risk reduction, oceans, and sustainable urban planning. These could result in a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs), or at a minimum, Rio+20 could launch the process leading to these goals and define their core principles.

As delegates began the negotiation process, it was noted that the text had expanded substantially following inclusion of the amendments to the zero draft. On the first day of the ‘informal-informal’ negotiations, the Title and Preamble were discussed. Initial discussions on the green economy made it clear that the definition of the green economy and the elements it should entail are still being developed, and that compromise may be difficult in this area. On the second day, the section on IFSD was introduced. Again, consensus was lacking in this thematic area, and some of the discussions were set aside. The third day focused on Section V: Framework for Action and Follow-up. Delegates made suggestions regarding the content of this section, including whether action and implementation should be divided into separate sections, as well as whether this section should include action-oriented items with clear targets and timelines, and whether the

specific commitments should be laid out in a separate compendium of commitments. Many delegates noted concern at the slow progress that the process was making.

Discussions on Section V centered around specific issue areas including: green jobs and social inclusion, oceans and seas, natural disasters, climate change, forests and biodiversity, land degradation and desertification, mountains, chemicals and wastes, sustainable consumption and production, education, gender equality, the private sector, sustainable innovation and investment, correct price signals, and mining. Again, delegates expressed concern for the slow pace of discussion, as well as the burgeoning number of proposed paragraphs in some sections that reflects the divergence of opinions and priorities in some issue areas.

Discussions on the sections on Oceans, Seas, and SIDS, covered issues related to oceans and climate, marine protected areas, governance of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, and ratification and implementation of major ocean-related conventions, with delegations disagreeing on some key issues. Many delegations highlighted the need for a stronger and more focused statement on the important issues associated with oceans and climate change, including sea-level rise, ocean acidification, and extreme weather events. Delegations also stressed the need to push for the further ratification and implementation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement. There was also strong support to highlight the need for the further establishment of marine protected area (MPAs) in the context of the CBD Aichi Biodiversity Target, which calls for the protection of at least 10% of marine areas by 2020. There was also much discussion on the need for strong text on addressing illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing, destructive fishing practices, and harmful subsidies. Despite agreement on many areas, there was contentious debate on text calling for the negotiation of a new UNCLOS Implementation Agreement for Marine Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction. The EU, the G-77 and China, and a number of other delegations strongly supported this text, while the US, Japan, Canada opposed text calling for a new agreement.

As the UNCSD Third Intersessional Meeting arrived the following week on March 26-27, 2012, it was clear that there remained much work to be done on the text itself. The co-chairs, therefore, decided to continue informal “paragraph by paragraph” negotiations on the text, rather than hold a formal intersessional meeting as originally planned. As negotiations continued, some were concerned that the text was becoming potentially unmanageable and that discussions on many of the more pressing and controversial issues were tabled.

As well, there were concerns from civil society that the Rio spirit of inclusion and transparency was not being upheld in the Rio+20 negotiations. At meetings with the Major Groups and the Rio+20 Bureau, civil society representatives noted, with great concern, that non-governmental organizations are unable to make statements during the plenary negotiations, and also that the Major Group’s formal amendments to the Rio+20 zero draft text were not included in the negotiating text. Significant concerns were being raised by civil society organizations on the glaring lack of attention on human rights

issues in the Rio+20 text. Major Groups were also concerned with the on-the-ground arrangements for the Rio+20 Conference, with limited travel support being made available for NGOs and large blocks of hotel rooms being reserved for large government delegations. The Rio+20 Bureau and the Brazilian government articulated commitments to address these issues and support the access and participation of civil society in the negotiations, including the announcement of an online system for voting on priorities to be included in the Rio+20 process that would provide input into the high-level ministerial segment.

## **Global Ocean Forum, IOC-UNESCO, and the Permanent UN Missions of Seychelles and Fiji Organize High-Level Ocean Side Event at Rio+20 Negotiations**

On March 26, 2012, The Global Ocean Forum, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO), the Permanent Mission of Fiji to the United Nations, and the Permanent Mission of Seychelles to the United Nations, held a side event at the 3rd Intersessional Meeting of United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development at the UN Headquarters in New York City. The event, “Oceans at Rio+20: Highlighting Oceans Issues in the Rio+20 Outcome Document: Moving the Agenda at and Beyond Rio” was attended by 98 representatives from governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and academia. The event focused on addressing the perspectives of States, UN agencies, and civil society on achieving a viable ocean outcome from the Rio+20 negotiation process and also provided a briefing on major ocean events to be held at the Rio+20 Conference.



Opening the Oceans Side Event at the Rio+20 3rd Intersessional meeting (pictured L-R: Amb. Ronald Jumeau, Amb. Elizabeth Thompson, IOC-UNESCO Executive Secretary Wendy Watson-Wright, and Global Ocean Forum President Dr. Biliana Cicin-Sain)

**Dr. Biliana Cicin-Sain**, President of the Global Ocean Forum, opened the event by noting that while the oceans and coasts did not figure prominently in the early discussions related to Rio+20, the mobilization by countries and NGOs that recognize the importance of oceans and coasts in achieving sustainable development resulted in the inclusion of ocean-related references in the Rio+20 Zero Draft submissions in over 2/3 of countries and by all political groups. The emphasis placed on oceans and coasts and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in these documents resulted in strong paragraphs in the January version of the Rio+20 negotiation text. Dr. Cicin-Sain applauded the elevation of ocean issues in the draft text, but noted that actionable and specific programs and solutions will have to be included in the final outcome if ocean related goals are to be realized. She did note, however, the need to further integrate text on integrated ecosystem-based governance, capacity development, and the need for enhanced financing support for coastal developing countries and SIDS. She urged governments to uphold the Rio principles laid out at UNCED and the WSSD and urged governments to not let the Rio opportunity slip away.

**Dr. Wendy Watson-Wright**, Executive Secretary, IOC-UNESCO, noted that the key challenge in Rio+20 is to find a way to reverse the global trend of unsustainable development and degradation of resources. The oceans have a vast potential to contribute to sustainable development, but this requires a vision and understanding of the ocean's capacity. Crucial in this process is the development of partnerships between governments, NGOs, and IGOs. IOC-UNESCO worked closely with UN agency partners, including the IMO, FAO, and UNDP, in the development of the Rio+20 submission document "A Blueprint for Ocean and Coastal Sustainability," which presents a vision and opportunities for the ocean in realizing sustainable development goals.

**Ambassador Elizabeth Thompson**, Executive Coordinator, Rio+20 Conference, highlighted that Rio+ 20 will have significant implications for SIDS. She emphasized that the negotiation process is ongoing, and the ocean community will need to sustain efforts in order to achieve a solid outcome. Ambassador Thompson noted that, for many people, the quality of the oceans is directly related to their quality of life. Past government-led efforts, including recent efforts by the government of Monaco, have helped to galvanize attention on oceans issues. What is needed now is to look at the tangible solutions that have been identified for the myriad of ocean-related challenges. She emphasized that the current Compendium of Commitments contains no commitments on oceans. If this draft document is to represent the implementation of platforms, initiatives, and programs coming out of Rio+20, it is crucial that issues related to the blue economy and ocean issues are included, along with specific, measurable targets to ensure that these commitments are realized. She highlighted some of the issues facing SIDS, including the need for coastal mapping, to address the challenges related to climate change, and the need to improve on disaster-related risk management and capacity. She also discussed the importance of fisheries, and the need to ensure the sustainable management of fish stocks.

**Ambassador Joseph Goddard**, Permanent Representative of Barbados to the UN, and Co-Chair of the States' Friends of the Ocean at Rio+20, recognized that States' Rio+20 Friends of the Ocean has provided a valuable tool in an informal setting to discuss the shared vision for the role of oceans in global sustainability. It was the Pacific SIDS that first presented the idea of the "blue economy," in which the benefits from the utilization of ocean resources must go to the people. He recognized that some of the key ocean and coastal ecosystems, including coral reefs and mangroves may soon reach threshold limits. In the Caribbean, these ecosystems provide critical resources that provide nutrition, contribute to poverty reduction, and provide jobs in the fisheries and tourism sectors. Relative to economic size, the countries in the Caribbean region are the most tourism-dependent in the world, most of which is related to the appeal of the oceans and coasts. Ambassador Goddard also discussed the current state of ocean issues in the Rio+20 negotiation process. He reported that the potential for strong ocean outcomes is in the current text, including references to equitable sharing of resources, improved fishing practices, and addressing climate change. He also noted that the ocean issues have not been as contentious as some had feared, but rather there has been good consensus in the recent negotiations. While these are positive signs, there must be continued pressure to ensure that oceans figure prominently as the new rules are developed. The international

community should start to identify possible issue areas that can be aligned with shared ocean priorities, relying on expertise on ocean issues in the process.

**Ambassador Gary Quinlan**, Permanent Representative of Australia to the UN, and Co-Chair, States' Friends of the Ocean at Rio+20, further discussed the negotiations process. He stated that, up to this point, the effort to mobilize thinking around oceans issues in the Rio+20 process was successful, as was reflected in the prominence of the oceans in the Zero Draft input and negotiating text. He noted that this has provided a basis for negotiation, and that there are some issue areas where prospective agreement may be achieved, as well as regional support for certain issue areas that may constitute core ocean elements. He agreed with the comments of Ambassador Thompson that there is a need for relevant commitment sections in the agreements emanating from Rio. In addition, he called for governments to first implement the commitments of the past Rio Conferences before turning to new commitments.

**Ambassador Ronald Jumeau**, Permanent Representative of Seychelles to the UN, discussed the importance of the oceans to the sustainable development of SIDS. While these countries represent some of the smallest countries in terms of land area, their ocean territories are vast, and thus oceans are of central importance. He reiterated the concerns of Ambassador Moses, Chair of the Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS), who noted that oceans, coasts, and SIDS had been ignored in the first two sections of the January draft negotiation text. Ambassador Jumeau stressed that, though oceans are of special concern to SIDS, it must be emphasized that the oceans are critically important to a number of countries in the global community, not just the SIDS. While there are only 35 countries in AOSIS, 85 nations are involved in the fish trade every year. If we are to make progress in realizing commitments and improving the utilization of coastal and oceans resources, the international community must sensitize people to understand that large numbers of people are affected by the utilization of ocean resources. He noted that the SIDS and the G-77 and China are speaking with some of the same language in some of the major issues of concern in the Rio+20 negotiation process, including in the areas of equity, technology transfer, fisheries, and ocean acidification. The international community has recognized some of the challenges related to threats facing coral reefs, sea level rise, coastal erosion, land-based sources of marine pollution, and the need for capacity building. He further noted that the blue economy must be included in the definition of the green economy. The blue economy is of critical importance to many developing countries, as oceans provide nutrition, tourism, and jobs. Ambassador Jumeau also described the challenge of piracy in the Indian Ocean and its impact on coastal communities. He concluded his discussion by emphasizing that, while oceans and resources are important to the international community as a whole, SIDS risk losing economic viability without safe, secure, and productive ocean environments. Many SIDS have nothing to fall back on but their oceans, and if the blue economy is not fully integrated into the Rio+20 outcome, SIDS will have failed.

**Mrs. Maria Teresa Mesquita Pessôa**,



Dr. Biliانا Cicin-Sain, Amb. Gary Quinlan, Amb. Joseph Goddard, and Amb. Maria Teresa Mesquita Pessoa discuss the thematic dialogues leading up to the Rio+20 Conference

Minister Plenipotentiary in the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations, emphasized that negotiations have not yet begun in the Rio+20 process. At present, everything is still on the table. Ms. Pessoa noted that it was part of the mandate of Rio+20 to analyze progress and gaps in implementation, and many significant ocean-related gaps were identified in the process. She expressed optimism that there is some positive language in the current draft text that addresses some of these gaps. Of particular importance was the need to address the utilization of marine resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). As a representative from Brazil, Ms. Pessoa also provided an update of the Rio+20 Conference, in which there will be a series of 9 thematic dialogues involving civil society held between the 3rd PrepCom and the Conference on June 16-18, 2012, one of which will be dedicated to oceans. These dialogues will provide an ideal opportunity for the ocean community to voice their needs outside of the formal negotiation process. The government of Brazil is collaborating with Ambassador Thompson and Ambassador Brice Lalonde, the Rio+20 Executive Coordinators, to organize these dialogues. It is the goal of the Rio+20 organizers that each dialogue will result in a set of three recommendations that will be taken to the Rio+20 high-level ministerial round table, and will be developed in a document for the Secretary General for follow-up after the conference.

**Mr. Vladimir Jares**, Principal Legal Officer, UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, spoke on the integration of past sustainable development conferences and the Law of the Sea. He noted that all of the major sustainable development conferences have highlighted the role of oceans and its resources for sustainable development. This year (2012) marks the 30th Anniversary of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which will be celebrated by a number of activities, and provides an opportunity to reflect on the achievements and challenges. In the context of the Rio+20 process and the Law of the Sea, he urged participants to look again at previously agreed-to commitments, many of which have not been achieved. UNCLOS can be used as a key document that should guide sustainable development discussion related to the oceans and

its resources, as it sets forth the means for protection of the marine environment for present and future generations and cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources, including in areas beyond national jurisdiction. He noted that UNCLOS provides a toolbox that states may wish to utilize in future discussions. Finally, Mr. Jares noted that the convergence of Rio+20 and the 30th Anniversary of the Law of the Sea provides a unique opportunity to elevate ocean issues to the highest level of the UN.

**Dr. Andrew Hudson**, Coordinator, UN-Oceans, and Head, Water and Ocean Governance Programme, UNDP, provided his observations on the oceans in the Rio+20 outcome document. He noted that one of the recurrent themes in the zero draft submissions was the need to reduce or eliminate the market failures that underlie the challenges facing oceans and coasts. He noted that, while some ecosystems, such as coral reefs, are addressed in the current negotiation text, other crucial ecosystems, including mangroves, have been left out. Some of these ecosystems are of particular importance for their carbon sequestration capacities, and could open the door to a blue carbon financing mechanism if the international community works to develop robust carbon inventory methodologies. He recognized that the outcome of Rio+20 should not only identify challenges, but also highlight areas of progress and opportunity, including the development of agreements in the shipping sector to address invasive species and reduce carbon emissions. He noted that there are potential opportunities for capacity building in ocean management, including through the scaling up of legal and policy tools in the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities, and in waste management. Dr. Hudson highlighted the threat of ocean acidification, which could have drastic ecological impacts and threaten some of the most important ecosystems in the world and the services they provide. He emphasized that the international community must specifically identify emissions as the main cause of acidification, and that this driver should be a catalyst to invigorate discussions of a new climate deal. Regarding fisheries, Dr. Hudson noted that the billions of dollars in harmful fishing subsidies should be redirected to investment in sustainable management of fish stocks, and a scaling up of rights-based approaches to fisheries management. Finally, the need to support increased financing of ocean-related projects was highlighted, including taking advantage of the current emphasis being placed on oceans through the newly-formed Global Partnership for Oceans, organized by the World Bank.

**Mr. Joe Appiott**, Policy Researcher, Global Ocean Forum, and **Ms. Brittany Baschuk**, Associate, International Policy, The Pew Environment Group, presented on behalf of the NGO Ocean Cluster. Ms. Baschuk discussed the development of the NGO Ocean Cluster, which is now made up of over 30 non-governmental organizations. The first task of the ocean cluster was to compile a set of amendments to the negotiation text, which was integrated into the formal input of the NGO Major Group (available [here](#)). She highlighted the significant support for an agreement on the high seas and ABNJ in the current negotiation text, which addresses a critical gap in ocean governance. She also discussed the need for improved and strengthened text that fully addresses the challenges facing the sustainable management of fisheries, including: illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing, harmful subsidies, the elimination of destructive practices, and

the need to establish maximum sustainable yield of fish stocks as a minimum standard. Mr. Appiott discussed the need for more explicit recognition of the crucial link between oceans and climate change in the outcome document, including the urgent need to address sea level rise and the increased threat of extreme weather events. He highlighted the need for stronger text on integrated, ecosystem-based ocean governance as essential to strengthening the three pillars of sustainable development. He also noted the need for governments to meet their existing capacity building and financing commitments related to the oceans and coasts and improve on the coordination and delivery of these funds. He also noted the important role of civil society in Rio+20 and urged the Rio+20 Bureau to continue to work to integrate the perspectives of NGOs into the process.

**Dr. Scott Doney**, Senior Scientist, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, discussed ocean acidification in the context of Rio+20, and the role of science in the process. Growing scientific evidence demonstrates that certain marine organisms are highly sensitive to the chemical changes associated with rising carbon dioxide concentrations in the ocean (known as ocean acidification), including mollusks, crustaceans, and corals, all of which are crucial to ocean resources as they provide the base of food webs. Acidification will adversely impact fisheries, and will affect the food supply, jobs, and tourism sectors. Rio+20 could play a vital role in the implementation of monitoring and adaptation strategies to address acidification. He highlighted the need for increased efforts on coastal monitoring, enhanced collection and compilation of data sources to understand the scope of the problem and possible solutions, and the development of best practices and adaptation strategies for building resilient coastal ecosystems and coastal-dependent livelihoods.

**Dr. Cicin-Sain** closed the panel portion of the event by highlighting plans for a major high-level oceans event, *Advancing Oceans and Coasts at Rio+20 and Beyond*, to be held on June 16 (flyer available [here](#)). This event, along with the thematic dialogue on ocean organized by the Brazilian government will be critical to delivering a final push on oceans at the Rio+20 Conference. She noted that the high-level ocean event will highlight major initiatives, particularly those that involve multiple countries, partners, and stakeholders, that can be tracked over time to spur development in the post-Rio+20 world. In addition, she described how the event would contribute to the development of a shared vision for the implementation of an oceans package emerging in the outcome. The Global Ocean Forum has reached out to a number of partners in government and civil society to participate in these events and discussion, and now invites further participation, collaboration, and high-level support.

In the open comment period, discussions focused on the need to better understand not only human-induced changes in the ocean, but also natural changes and how these processes affect one another. Participants also stressed the need to address the growing concerns associated with plastics in the ocean and their significant ecological impacts; building coastal resiliencies; and piracy.



Audience at the Oceans Side Event  
(Photo courtesy of IOC-UNESCO)

## **Global Ocean Forum Welcomes Additional Collaborators in Major Oceans Event to Be Held at Rio+20 Conference**

The Global Ocean Forum, in collaboration with a number of partners will organize a major high-level oceans event at the Rio+20 Conference, *Advancing Oceans and Coasts at Rio+20 and Beyond*, on June 16, 2012 (flyer available [here](#)).

In addition to the State Oceanic Administration (SOA) of the People's Republic of China, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and the University of Delaware, the Global Ocean Forum now also welcomes the Ocean Policy Research Foundation of Japan as a main organizer, as well as the following co-organizers:

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);  
International Maritime Organization (IMO);  
Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO)  
World Bank;  
Fórum Do Mar (Brazil);  
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat;  
Republic of Seychelles;  
Republic of Vietnam;  
World Ocean Network;  
World Wildlife Fund (WWF);  
The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

This event will bring together high-level representatives from governments, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, industry, and the science community to:

- (1) Continue to push for a strong oceans outcome at the negotiations of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, building on the priorities for Rio+20 that have been articulated by the oceans community;
- (2) Showcase major funded initiatives to spur action on oceans, coasts, and small island developing States in the post-Rio+20 world; and
- (3) Consider the opportunities and challenges for implementation of the “oceans package” emanating from the Rio+20 Conference.

This event will also celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Global Ocean Forum, which was formed to help the world's governments place issues related to oceans, coasts, and small island developing States on the agenda of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The organizers are currently accepting proposals for panels, speakers, and announcements of funded partnerships/initiatives to be highlighted during the event.

Those interested in proposing a panel or a new partnership/initiative to be highlighted are asked to complete and return the form found [here](#), no later than **April 15, 2012**.

As well, the Global Ocean Forum will be putting together and distributing a list of ocean events at Rio+20 to facilitate coordination among the various efforts in order to achieve maximum impact. Please send details on your ocean events at Rio to Ms. Gwenaelle Hamon ([gwenaelle.hamon@globaloceans.org](mailto:gwenaelle.hamon@globaloceans.org)).